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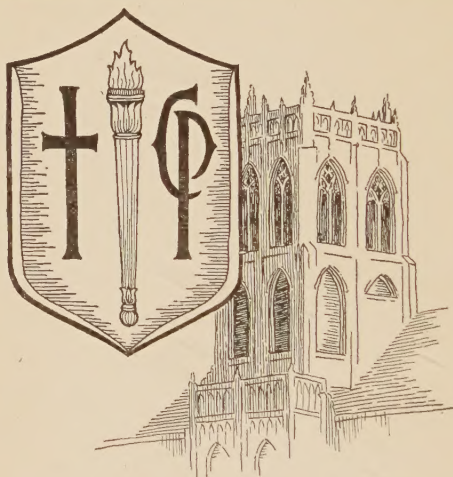
# SONNETS

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EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON

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COLLEGE  
OF THE PACIFIC

WITHDRAWN

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SONNETS

BY

EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON

COLLECTED POEMS

*Avon's Harvest*

*Captain Craig*

*The Children of the Night*

*Lancelot*

*The Man Against the Sky*

*Merlin*

*The Town Down the River*

*The Three Taverns*

DIONYSUS IN DOUBT

THE MAN WHO DIED TWICE

THE PORCUPINE

ROMAN BARTHOLOW

THE THREE TAVERNS

VAN ZORN

TRISTRAM

SONNETS

1889-1927

EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON

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NEW YORK

1928

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SONNETS.



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## SONNETS



## CALVARY

FRIENDLESS and faint, with martyred steps and slow,  
Faint for the flesh, but for the spirit free,  
Stung by the mob that came to see the show,  
The Master toiled along to Calvary;  
We gibed him, as he went, with houndish glee,  
Till his dimmed eyes for us did overflow;  
We cursed his vengeless hands thrice wretchedly,—  
And this was nineteen hundred years ago.

But after nineteen hundred years the shame  
Still clings, and we have not made good the loss,  
That outraged faith has entered in his name.  
Ah, when shall come love's courage to be strong!  
Tell me, O Lord—tell me, O Lord, how long  
Are we to keep Christ writhing on the cross!

## DEAR FRIENDS

DEAR friends, reproach me not for what I do,  
Nor counsel me, nor pity me; nor say  
That I am wearing half my life away  
For bubble-work that only fools pursue.  
And if my bubbles be too small for you,  
Blow bigger than your own: the games we play  
To fill the frittered minutes of a day,  
Good glasses are to read the spirit through.

And whoso reads may get him some shrewd skill;  
And some unprofitable scorn resign,  
To praise the very thing that he deplores.  
So, friends (dear friends), remember, if you will,  
The shame I win for singing is all mine,  
The gold I miss for dreaming is all yours.

THE STORY OF THE ASHES  
AND THE FLAME

No MATTER why, nor whence, nor when she came,  
There was her place. No matter what men said,  
No matter what she was; living or dead,  
Faithful or not, he loved her all the same.  
The story was as old as human shame,  
But ever since that lonely night she fled,  
With books to blind him, he had only read  
The story of the ashes and the flame.

There she was always coming pretty soon  
To fool him back, with penitent scared eyes  
That had in them the laughter of the moon  
For baffled lovers, and to make him think—  
Before she gave him time enough to wink—  
Her kisses were the keys to Paradise.

## AMARYLLIS

ONCE, when I wandered in the woods alone,  
An old man tottered up to me and said,  
"Come, friend, and see the grave that I have made  
For Amaryllis." There was in the tone  
Of his complaint such quaver and such moan  
That I took pity on him and obeyed,  
And long stood looking where his hands had laid  
An ancient woman, shrunk to skin and bone.

Far out beyond the forest I could hear  
The calling of loud progress, and the bold  
Incessant scream of commerce ringing clear;  
But though the trumpets of the world were glad,  
It made me lonely and it made me sad  
To think that Amaryllis had grown old.



## ZOLA

BECAUSE he puts the compromising chart  
Of hell before your eyes, you are afraid;  
Because he counts the price that you have paid  
For innocence, and counts it from the start,  
You loathe him. But he sees the human heart  
Of God meanwhile, and in His hand has weighed  
Your squeamish and emasculate crusade  
Against the grim dominion of his art.

Never until we conquer the uncouth  
Connivings of our shamed indifference  
(We call it Christian faith) are we to scan  
The racked and shrieking hideousness of Truth  
To find, in hate's polluted self-defence,  
Throbbing, the pulse, the divine heart of man.

## THE PITY OF THE LEAVES

VENGEFUL across the cold November moors,  
Loud with ancestral shame there came the bleak  
Sad wind that shrieked, and answered with a shriek,  
Reverberant through lonely corridors.  
The old man heard it; and he heard, perforce,  
Words out of lips that were no more to speak—  
Words of the past that shook the old man's cheek  
Like dead, remembered footsteps on old floors.

And then there were the leaves that plagued him so!  
The brown, thin leaves that on the stones outside  
Skipped with a freezing whisper. Now and then  
They stopped, and stayed there—just to let him know  
How dead they were; but if the old man cried,  
They fluttered off like withered souls of men.

## AARON STARK

WITHAL a meagre man was Aaron Stark,  
Cursed and unkempt, shrewd, shrivelled, and  
morose.

A miser was he, with a miser's nose,  
And eyes like little dollars in the dark.  
His thin, pinched mouth was nothing but a mark;  
And when he spoke there came like sullen blows  
Through scattered fangs a few snarled words and  
close,  
As if a cur were chary of its bark.

Glad for the murmur of his hard renown,  
Year after year he shambled through the town,  
A loveless exile moving with a staff;  
And oftentimes there crept into his ears  
A sound of alien pity, touched with tears,—  
And then (and only then) did Aaron laugh.

## THE GARDEN

THERE is a fenceless garden overgrown  
With buds and blossoms and all sorts of leaves;  
And once, among the roses and the sheaves,  
The Gardener and I were there alone.  
He led me to the plot where I had thrown  
The fennel of my days on wasted ground,  
And in that riot of sad weeds I found  
The fruitage of a life that was my own.

My life! Ah, yes, there was my life, indeed!  
And there were all the lives of humankind;  
And they were like a book that I could read,  
Whose every leaf, miraculously signed,  
Outrolled itself from Thought's eternal seed,  
Love-rooted in God's garden of the mind.

## CLIFF KLINGENHAGEN

CLIFF KLINGENHAGEN had me in to dine  
With him one day; and after soup and meat,  
And all the other things there were to eat,  
Cliff took two glasses and filled one with wine  
And one with wormwood. Then, without a sign  
For me to choose at all, he took the draught  
Of bitterness himself, and lightly quaffed  
It off, and said the other one was mine.

And when I asked him what the deuce he meant  
By doing that, he only looked at me  
And smiled, and said it was a way of his.  
And though I know the fellow, I have spent  
Long time a-wondering when I shall be  
As happy as Cliff Klingenhagen is.

## CHARLES CARVILLE'S EYES

A MELANCHOLY face Charles Carville had,  
But not so melancholy as it seemed,  
When once you knew him, for his mouth redeemed  
His insufficient eyes, forever sad:  
In them there was no life-glimpse, good or bad,  
Nor joy nor passion in them ever gleamed;  
His mouth was all of him that ever beamed,  
His eyes were sorry, but his mouth was glad.

He never was a fellow that said much,  
And half of what he did say was not heard  
By many of us: we were out of touch  
With all his whims and all his theories  
Till he was dead, so those blank eyes of his  
Might speak them. Then we heard them, every word.

## THE DEAD VILLAGE

HERE there is death. But even here, they say,  
Here where the dull sun shines this afternoon  
As desolate as ever the dead moon  
Did glimmer on dead Sardis, men were gay;  
And there were little children here to play,  
With small soft hands that once did keep in tune  
The strings that stretch from heaven, till too soon  
The change came, and the music passed away.

Now there is nothing but the ghosts of things,—  
No life, no love, no children, and no men;  
And over the forgotten place there clings  
The strange and unrememberable light  
That is in dreams. The music failed, and then  
God frowned, and shut the village from His sight.

## TWO SONNETS

### I

Just as I wonder at the twofold screen  
Of twisted innocence that you would plait  
For eyes that uncourageously await  
The coming of a kingdom that has been,  
So do I wonder what God's love can mean  
To you that all so strangely estimate  
The purpose and the consequent estate  
Of one short shuddering step to the Unseen.

No, I have not your backward faith to shrink  
Lone-faring from the doorway of God's home  
To find Him in the names of buried men;  
Nor your ingenious recreance to think  
We cherish, in the life that is to come,  
The scattered features of dead friends again.



## TWO SONNETS

### II

NEVER until our souls are strong enough  
To plunge into the crater of the Scheme—  
Triumphant in the flash there to redeem  
Love's hansom and forevermore to slough,  
Like cerements at a played-out masque, the rough  
And reptile skins of us whereon we set  
The stigma of scared years—are we to get  
Where atoms and the ages are one stuff.

Nor ever shall we know the cursed waste  
Of life in the beneficence divine  
Of starlight and of sunlight and soul-shine  
That we have squandered in sin's frail distress,  
Till we have drunk, and trembled at the taste,  
The mead of Thought's prophetic endlessness.

## THE CLERKS

I DID not think that I should find them there  
When I came back again; but there they stood,  
As in the days they dreamed of when young blood  
Was in their cheeks and women called them fair.  
Be sure, they met me with an ancient air,—  
And yes, there was a shop-worn brotherhood  
About them; but the men were just as good,  
And just as human as they ever were.

And you that ache so much to be sublime,  
And you that feed yourselves with your descent,  
What comes of all your visions and your fears?  
Poets and kings are but the clerks of Time,  
Tiering the same dull webs of discontent,  
Clipping the same sad alnage of the years.

## FLEMING HELPHENSTINE

AT FIRST I thought there was a superfine  
Persuasion in his face; but the free glow  
That filled it when he stopped and cried, "Hollo!"  
Shone joyously, and so I let it shine.  
He said his name was Fleming Helphenstine,  
But be that as it may;—I only know  
He talked of this and that and So-and-So,  
And laughed and chaffed like any friend of mine.

But soon, with a queer, quick frown, he looked at me,  
And I looked hard at him; and there we gazed  
In a strained way that made us cringe and wince:  
Then, with a wordless clogged apology  
That sounded half confused and half amazed,  
He dodged,—and I have never seen him since.

## THOMAS HOOD

THE man who cloaked his bitterness within  
This winding-sheet of puns and pleasantries,  
God never gave to look with common eyes  
Upon a world of anguish and of sin:  
His brother was the branded man of Lynn;  
And there are woven with his jollities  
The nameless and eternal tragedies  
That render hope and hopelessness akin.

We laugh, and crown him; but anon we feel  
A still chord sorrow-swept,—a weird unrest;  
And thin dim shadows home to midnight steal,  
As if the very ghost of mirth were dead—  
As if the joys of time to dreams had fled,  
Or sailed away with Ines to the West.

## HORACE TO LEUCONOË

I PRAY you not, Leuconoë, to pore  
With unpermitted eyes on what may be  
Appointed by the gods for you and me,  
Nor on Chaldean figures any more.  
'T were infinitely better to implore  
The present only:—whether Jove decree  
More winters yet to come, or whether he  
Make even this, whose hard, wave-eaten shore  
Shatters the Tuscan seas to-day, the last—  
Be wise withal, and rack your wine, nor fill  
Your bosom with large hopes; for while I sing,  
The envious close of time is narrowing;  
So seize the day, or ever it be past,  
And let the morrow come for what it will.

## REUBEN BRIGHT

BECAUSE he was a butcher and thereby  
Did earn an honest living (and did right),  
I would not have you think that Reuben Bright  
Was any more a brute than you or I;  
For when they told him that his wife must die,  
He stared at them, and shook with grief and fright,  
And cried like a great baby half that night,  
And made the women cry to see him cry.

And after she was dead, and he had paid  
The singers and the sexton and the rest,  
He packed a lot of things that she had made  
Most mournfully away in an old chest  
Of hers, and put some chopped-up cedar boughs  
In with them, and tore down the slaughter-house.

## THE ALTAR

ALONE, remote, nor witting where I went,  
I found an altar builded in a dream—  
A fiery place, whereof there was a gleam  
So swift, so searching, and so eloquent  
Of upward promise, that love's murmur, blent  
With sorrow's warning, gave but a supreme  
Unending impulse to that human stream  
Whose flood was all for the flame's fury bent.

Alas! I said,—the world is in the wrong.  
But the same quenchless fever of unrest  
That thrilled the foremost of that martyred throng  
Thrilled me, and I awoke . . . and was the same  
Bewildered insect plunging for the flame  
That burns, and must burn somehow for the best.

## THE TAVERN

WHENEVER I go by there nowadays  
And look at the rank weeds and the strange grass,  
The torn blue curtains and the broken glass,  
I seem to be afraid of the old place;  
And something stiffens up and down my face,  
For all the world as if I saw the ghost  
Of old Ham Amory, the murdered host,  
With his dead eyes turned on me all aglaze.

The Tavern has a story, but no man  
Can tell us what it is. We only know  
That once long after midnight, years ago,  
A stranger galloped up from Tilbury Town,  
Who brushed, and scared, and all but overran  
That skirt-crazed reprobate, John Evereldown.



## SONNET

OH, FOR a poet—for a beacon bright  
To rift this changeless glimmer of dead gray;  
To spirit back the Muses, long astray,  
And flush Parnassus with a newer light;  
To put these little sonnet-men to flight  
Who fashion, in a shrewd mechanic way,  
Songs without souls, that flicker for a day,  
To vanish in irrevocable night.

What does it mean, this barren age of ours?  
Here are the men, the women, and the flowers,  
The seasons, and the sunset, as before.  
What does it mean? Shall there not one arise  
To wrench one banner from the western skies,  
And mark it with his name for evermore?

GEORGE CRABBE

GIVE him the darkest inch your shelf allows,  
Hide him in lonely garrets, if you will,  
But his hard, human pulse is throbbing still  
With the sure strength that fearless truth endows.  
In spite of all fine science disavows,  
Of his plain excellence and stubborn skill  
There yet remains what fashion cannot kill,  
Though years have thinned the laurel from his brows.

Whether or not we read him, we can feel  
From time to time the vigor of his name  
Against us like a finger for the shame  
And emptiness of what our souls reveal  
In books that are as altars where we kneel  
To consecrate the flicker, not the flame.

## C R E D O

I CANNOT find my way: there is no star  
In all the shrouded heavens anywhere;  
And there is not a whisper in the air  
Of any living voice but one so far  
That I can hear it only as a bar  
Of lost, imperial music, played when fair  
And angel fingers wove, and unaware,  
Dead leaves to garlands where no roses are.

No, there is not a glimmer, nor a call,  
For one that welcomes, welcomes when he fears,  
The black and awful chaos of the night;  
For through it all—above, beyond it all—  
I know the far-sent message of the years,  
I feel the coming glory of the Light.

ON THE NIGHT OF A  
FRIEND'S WEDDING

IF EVER I am old and all alone,  
I shall have killed one grief, at any rate;  
For then, thank God, I shall not have to wait  
Much longer for the sheaves that I have sown.  
The devil only knows what I have done,  
But here I am, and here are six or eight  
Good friends, who most ingenuously prate  
About my songs to such and such a one.

But everything is all askew to-night,—  
As if the time were come, or almost come,  
For their untenanted mirage of me  
To lose itself and crumble out of sight,  
Like a tall ship that floats above the foam  
A little while, and then breaks utterly.

## SONNET

THE master and the slave go hand in hand,  
Though touch be lost. The poet is a slave,  
And there be kings do sorrowfully crave  
The joyance that a scullion may command.  
But, ah, the sonnet-slave must understand  
The mission of his bondage, or the grave  
May clasp his bones, or ever he shall save  
The perfect word that is the poet's wand.

The sonnet is a crown, whereof the rhymes  
Are for Thought's purest gold the jewel-stones;  
But shapes and echoes that are never done  
Will haunt the workshop, as regret sometimes  
Will bring with human yearning to sad thrones  
The crash of battles that are never won.

## VERLAINE

WHY do you dig like long-clawed scavengers  
To touch the covered corpse of him that fled  
The uplands for the fens, and rioted  
Like a sick satyr with doom's worshippers?  
Come! let the grass grow there; and leave his verse  
To tell the story of the life he led.  
Let the man go: let the dead flesh be dead,  
And let the worms be its biographers.

Song sloughs away the sin to find redress  
In art's complete remembrance: nothing clings  
For long but laurel to the stricken brow  
That felt the Muse's finger: nothing less  
Than hell's fulfillment of the end of things  
Can blot the star that shines on Paris now.

## SONNET

WHEN we can all so excellently give  
The measure of love's wisdom with a blow,  
Why can we not in turn receive it so,  
And end this murmur for the life we live?  
And when we do so frantically strive  
To win strange faith, why do we shun to know  
That in love's elemental over-glow  
God's wholeness gleams with light superlative?

Oh, brother men, if you have eyes at all,  
Look at a branch, a bird, a child, a rose,  
Or anything God ever made that grows,—  
Nor let the smallest vision of it slip,  
Till you may read, as on Belshazzar's wall,  
The glory of eternal partnership.

## SUPREMACY

THERE is a drear and lonely tract of hell  
From all the common gloom removed afar:  
A flat, sad land it is, where shadows are,  
Whose lorn estate my verse may never tell.  
I walked among them and I knew them well:  
Men I had slandered on life's little star  
For churls and sluggards; and I knew the scar  
Upon their brows of woe ineffable.

But as I went majestic on my way,  
Into the dark they vanished, one by one,  
Till, with a shaft of God's eternal day,  
The dream of all my glory was undone,—  
And, with a fool's importunate dismay,  
I heard the dead men singing in the sun.



## THE TORRENT

I FOUND a torrent falling in a glen  
Where the sun's light shone silvered and leaf-split;  
The boom, the foam, and the mad flash of it  
All made a magic symphony; but when  
I thought upon the coming of hard men  
To cut those patriarchal trees away,  
And turn to gold the silver of that spray,  
I shuddered. Yet a gladness now and then  
Did wake me to myself till I was glad  
In earnest, and was welcoming the time  
For screaming saws to sound above the chime  
Of idle waters, and for me to know  
The jealous visionings that I had had  
Were steps to the great place where trees and torrents go.

## L'ENVOI

Now in a thought, now in a shadowed word,  
Now in a voice that thrills eternity,  
Ever there comes an onward phrase to me  
Of some transcendent music I have heard;  
No piteous thing by soft hands dulcimered,  
No trumpet crash of blood-sick victory,  
But a glad strain of some vast harmony  
That no brief mortal touch has ever stirred.

There is no music in the world like this,  
No character wherewith to set it down,  
No kind of instrument to make it sing.  
No kind of instrument? Ah, yes, there is;  
And after time and place are overthrown,  
God's touch will keep its one chord quivering.

## THE SAGE

FOREGUARDED and unfevered and serene,  
Back to the perilous gates of Truth he went—  
Back to fierce wisdom and the Orient,  
To the Dawn that is, that shall be, and has been:  
Previsioned of the madness and the mean,  
He stood where Asia, crowned with ravishment,  
The curtain of Love's inner shrine had rent,  
And after had gone scarred by the Unseen.

There at his touch there was a treasure chest,  
And in it was a gleam, but not of gold;  
And on it, like a flame, these words were scrolled:  
"I keep the mintage of Eternity.  
Who comes to take one coin may take the rest,  
And all may come—but not without the key."

## ERASMUS

WHEN he protested, not too solemnly,  
That for a world's achieving maintenance  
The crust of overdone divinity  
Lacked aliment, they called it recreance;  
And when he chose through his own glass to scan  
Sick Europe, and reduced, unyieldingly,  
The monk within the cassock to the man  
Within the monk, they called it heresy.

And when he made so perilously bold  
As to be scattered forth in black and white,  
Good fathers looked askance at him and rolled  
Their inward eyes in anguish and affright;  
There were some of them did shake at what was told,  
And they shook best who knew that he was right.

## THE GROWTH OF "LORRAINE"

### I

WHILE I stood listening, discreetly dumb,  
Lorraine was having the last word with me:  
"I know," she said, "I know it, but you see  
Some creatures are born fortunate, and some  
Are born to be found out and overcome,—  
Born to be slaves, to let the rest go free;  
And if I'm one of them (and I must be)  
You may as well forget me and go home.

"You tell me not to say these things, I know,  
But I should never try to be content:  
I've gone too far; the life would be too slow.  
Some could have done it—some girls have the  
stuff;  
But I can't do it: I don't know enough.  
I'm going to the devil."—And she went.

## THE GROWTH OF "LORRAINE"

### II

I did not half believe her when she said  
That I should never hear from her again;  
Nor when I found a letter from Lorraine,  
Was I surprised or grieved at what I read:  
"Dear friend, when you find this, I shall be dead.  
You are too far away to make me stop.  
They say that one drop—think of it, one drop!—  
Will be enough,—but I'll take five instead.

"You do not frown because I call you friend,  
For I would have you glad that I still keep  
Your memory, and even at the end—  
Impenitent, sick, shattered—cannot curse  
The love that flings, for better or for worse,  
This worn-out, cast-out flesh of mine to sleep."

## THE WOMAN AND THE WIFE

### I THE EXPLANATION

"You thought we knew," she said, "but we were wrong.

This we can say, the rest we do not say;  
Nor do I let you throw yourself away  
Because you love me. Let us both be strong,  
And we shall find in sorrow, before long,  
Only the price Love ruled that we should pay:  
The dark is at the end of every day,  
And silence is the end of every song.

"You ask me for one proof that I speak right,  
But I can answer only what I know;  
You look for just one lie to make black white,  
But I can tell you only what is true—  
God never made me for the wife of you.  
This we can say,—believe me! . . . Tell me so!"

## THE WOMAN AND THE WIFE

### II THE ANNIVERSARY

“Give me the truth, whatever it may be.  
You thought we knew, now tell me what you miss:  
You are the one to tell me what it is—  
You are a man, and you have married me.  
What is it worth to-night that you can see  
More marriage in the dream of one dead kiss  
Than in a thousand years of life like this?  
Passion has turned the lock, Pride keeps the key.

“Whatever I have said or left unsaid,  
Whatever I have done or left undone,—  
Tell me. Tell me the truth . . . Are you afraid?  
Do you think that Love was ever fed with lies  
But hunger lived thereafter in his eyes?  
Do you ask me to take moonlight for the sun?”



## DORICHA

(*Posidippus*)

So now the very bones of you are gone  
Where they were dust and ashes long ago;  
And there was the last ribbon you tied on  
To bind your hair, and that is dust also;  
And somewhere there is dust that was of old  
A soft and scented garment that you wore—  
The same that once till dawn did closely fold  
You in with fair Charaxus, fair no more.

But Sappho, and the white leaves of her song,  
Will make your name a word for all to learn,  
And all to love thereafter, even while  
It's but a name; and this will be as long  
As there are distant ships that will return  
Again to Naucratis and to the Nile.

## LEFFINGWELL

### I THE LURE

No, no,—forget your Cricket and your Ant,  
For I shall never set my name to theirs  
That now bespeak the very sons and heirs  
Incarnate of Queen Gossip and King Cant.  
The case of Leffingwell is mixed, I grant,  
And futile seems the burden that he bears;  
But are we sounding his forlorn affairs  
Who brand him parasite and sycophant?

I tell you, Leffingwell was more than these;  
And if he proved a rather sorry knight,  
What quiverings in the distance of what light  
May not have lured him with high promises,  
And then gone down?—He may have been  
deceived;  
He may have lied,—he did; and he believed.

## LEFFINGWELL

### II THE QUICKSTEP

THE dirge is over, the good work is done,  
All as he would have had it, and we go;  
And we who leave him say we do not know  
How much is ended or how much begun.  
So men have said before of many a one;  
So men may say of us when Time shall throw  
Such earth as may be needful to bestow  
On you and me the covering hush we shun.

Well hated, better loved, he played and lost,  
And left us; and we smile at his arrears;  
And who are we to know what it all cost,  
Or what we may have wrung from him, the buyer?  
The pageant of his failure-laden years  
Told ruin of high price. The place was higher.

## LEFFINGWELL

### III REQUIESCAT

WE NEVER knew the sorrow or the pain  
Within him, for he seemed as one asleep—  
Until he faced us with a dying leap,  
And with a blast of paramount, profane,  
And vehement valediction did explain  
To each of us, in words that we shall keep,  
Why we were not to wonder or to weep,  
Or ever dare to wish him back again.

He may be now an amiable shade,  
With merry fellow-phantoms unafraid  
Around him—but we do not ask. We know  
That he would rise and haunt us horribly,  
And be with us o' nights of a certainty.  
Did we not hear him when he told us so?

## LINGARD AND THE STARS

THE table hurled itself, to our surprise,  
At Lingard, and anon rapped eagerly:  
“When earth is cold and there is no more sea,  
There will be what was Lingard. Otherwise,  
Why lure the race to ruin through the skies?  
And why have Leffingwell, or Calverly?”—  
“I wish the ghost would give his name,” said he;  
And searching gratitude was in his eyes.

He stood then by the window for a time,  
And only after the last midnight chime  
Smote the day dead did he say anything:  
“Come out, my little one, the stars are bright;  
Come out, you lælaps, and inhale the night.”  
And so he went away with Clavering.

## HOW ANNANDALE WENT OUT

“THEY called it Annandale—and I was there  
To flourish, to find words, and to attend:  
Liar, physician, hypocrite, and friend,  
I watched him; and the sight was not so fair  
As one or two that I have seen elsewhere:  
An apparatus not for me to mend—  
A wreck, with hell between him and the end,  
Remained of Annandale; and I was there.

“I knew the ruin as I knew the man;  
So put the two together, if you can,  
Remembering the worst you know of me.  
Now view yourself as I was, on the spot—  
With a slight kind of engine. Do you see?  
Like this . . . You wouldn't hang me? I thought  
not.”

## ALMA MATER

He knocked, and I beheld him at the door—  
A vision for the gods to verify.  
“What battered ancientry is this,” thought I,  
“And when, if ever, did we meet before?”  
But ask him as I might, I got no more  
For answer than a moaning and a cry:  
Too late to parley, but in time to die,  
He staggered, and lay shapeless on the floor.

When had I known him? And what brought him  
here?

Love, warning, malediction, hunger, fear?  
Surely I never thwarted such as he?—  
Again, what soiled obscurity was this:  
Out of what scum, and up from what abyss,  
Had they arrived—these rags of memory?

## SHADRACH O'LEARY

O'LEARY was a poet—for a while:  
He sang of many ladies frail and fair,  
The rolling glory of their golden hair,  
And emperors extinguished with a smile.  
They foiled his years with many an ancient wile,  
And if they limped, O'Leary didn't care:  
He turned them loose and had them everywhere,  
Undoing saints and senates with their guile.

But this was not the end. A year ago  
I met him—and to meet was to admire:  
Forgotten were the ladies and the lyre,  
And the small, ink-fed Eros of his dream.  
By questioning I found a man to know—  
A failure spared, a Shadrach of the Gleam.



## DOCTOR OF BILLIARDS

OF ALL among the fallen from on high,  
We count you last and leave you to regain  
Your born dominion of a life made vain  
By three spheres of insidious ivory.  
You dwindle to the lesser tragedy—  
Content, you say. We call, but you remain.  
Nothing alive gone wrong could be so plain,  
Or quite so blasted with absurdity.

You click away the kingdom that is yours,  
And you click off your crown for cap and bells;  
You smile, who are still master of the feast,  
And for your smile we credit you the least;  
But when your false, unhallowed laugh occurs,  
We seem to think there may be something else.

## THE SUNKEN CROWN

Nothing will hold him longer—let him go;  
Let him go down where others have gone down;  
Little he cares whether we smile or frown,  
Or if we know, or if we think we know.  
The call is on him for his overthrow,  
Say we; so let him rise, or let him drown.  
Poor fool! He plunges for the sunken crown,  
And we—we wait for what the plunge may show.

Well, we are safe enough. Why linger, then?  
The watery chance was his, not ours. Poor fool!  
Poor truant, poor Narcissus out of school;  
Poor jest of Ascalon; poor king of men.  
The crown, if he be wearing it, may cool  
His arrogance, and he may sleep again.

FOR ARVIA

*On Her Fifth Birthday*

You EYES, you large and all-inquiring Eyes,  
That look so dubiously into me,  
And are not satisfied with what you see,  
Tell me the worst and let us have no lies:  
Tell me the meaning of your scrutinies,  
And of myself. Am I a Mystery?  
Am I a Boojum—or just Company?  
What do you say? What do you think, You Eyes?

You say not; but you think, beyond a doubt;  
And you have the whole world to think about,  
With very little time for little things.  
So let it be; and let it all be fair—  
For you, and for the rest who cannot share  
Your gold of unrevealed awakenings.

## ANOTHER DARK LADY

THINK not, because I wonder where you fled,  
That I would lift a pin to see you there;  
You may, for me, be prowling anywhere,  
So long as you show not your little head:  
No dark and evil story of the dead  
Would leave you less pernicious or less fair—  
Not even Lilith, with her famous hair;  
And Lilith was the devil, I have read.

I cannot hate you, for I loved you then.  
The woods were golden then. There was a road  
Through beeches; and I said their smooth feet  
showed  
Like yours. Truth must have heard me from afar,  
For I shall never have to learn again  
That yours are cloven as no beech's are.

## A SONG AT SHANNON'S

Two men came out of Shannon's, having known  
The faces of each other for as long  
As they had listened there to an old song,  
Sung thinly in a wastrel monotone  
By some unhappy night-bird, who had flown  
Too many times and with a wing too strong  
To save himself, and so done heavy wrong  
To more frail elements than his alone.

Slowly away they went, leaving behind  
More light than was before them. Neither met  
The other's eyes again or said a word.  
Each to his loneliness or to his kind,  
Went his own way, and with his own regret,  
Not knowing what the other may have heard.

## SOUVENIR

A VANISHED house that for an hour I knew  
By some forgotten chance when I was young  
Had once a glimmering window overhung  
With honeysuckle wet with evening dew.  
Along the path tall dusky dahlias grew,  
And shadowy hydrangeas reached and swung  
Ferociously; and over me, among  
The moths and mysteries, a blurred bat flew.

Somewhere within there were dim presences  
Of days that hovered and of years gone by.  
I waited, and between their silences  
There was an evanescent faded noise;  
And though a child, I knew it was the voice  
Of one whose occupation was to die.

## DISCOVERY

WE TOLD of him as one who should have soared  
And seen for us the devastating light  
Whereof there is not either day or night,  
And shared with us the glamour of the Word  
That fell once upon Amos to record  
For men at ease in Zion, when the sight  
Of ills obscured aggrieved him and the might  
Of Hamath was a warning of the Lord.

Assured somehow that he would make us wise,  
Our pleasure was to wait; and our surprise  
Was hard when we confessed the dry return  
Of his regret. For we were still to learn  
That earth has not a school where we may go  
For wisdom, or for more than we may know.

## FIRELIGHT

TEN years together without yet a cloud,  
They seek each other's eyes at intervals  
Of gratefulness to firelight and four walls  
For love's obliteration of the crowd.  
Serenely and perennially endowed  
And bowered as few may be, their joy recalls  
No snake, no sword; and over them there falls  
The blessing of what neither says aloud.

Wiser for silence, they were not so glad  
Were she to read the graven tale of lines  
On the ~~wan~~ face of one somewhere alone;  
Nor were they more content could he have had  
Her thoughts a moment since of one who shines  
Apart, and would be hers if he had known.



## THE NEW TENANTS

THE day was here when it was his to know  
How fared the barriers he had built between  
His triumph and his enemies unseen,  
For them to undermine and overthrow;  
And it was his no longer to forego  
The sight of them, insidious and serene,  
Where they were delving always and had been  
Left always to be vicious and to grow.

And there were the new tenants who had come,  
By doors that were left open unawares,  
Into his house, and were so much at home  
There now that he would hardly have to guess,  
By the slow guile of their vindictiveness,  
What ultimate insolence would soon be theirs.

## INFERNAL

ALTHOUGH I saw before me there the face  
Of one whom I had honored among men  
The least, and on regarding him again  
Would not have had him in another place,  
He fitted with an unfamiliar grace  
The coffin where I could not see him then  
As I had seen him and appraised him when  
I deemed him unessential to the race.

For there was more of him than what I saw,  
And there was on me more than the old awe  
That is the common genius of the dead.  
I might as well have heard him: "Never mind;  
If some of us were not so far behind,  
The rest of us were not so far ahead."

## THE RAT

As OFTEN as he let himself be seen  
We pitied him, or scorned him, or deplored  
The inscrutable profusion of the Lord  
Who shaped as one of us a thing so mean—  
Who made him human when he might have been  
A rat, and so been wholly in accord  
With any other creature we abhorred  
As always useless and not always clean.

Now he is hiding all alone somewhere,  
And in a final hole not ready then;  
For now he is among those over there  
Who are not coming back to us again.  
And we who do the fiction of our share,  
Say less of rats and rather more of men.

## AN EVANGELIST'S WIFE

“WHY am I not myself these many days,  
You ask? And have you nothing more to ask?  
I do you wrong? I do not hear your praise  
To God for giving you me to share your task?

“Jealous,—of Her? Because her cheeks are pink,  
And she has eyes? No, not if she had seven.  
If you should only steal an hour to think,  
Sometime, there might be less to be forgiven.

“No, you are never cruel. If once or twice  
I found you so, I could applaud and sing.  
Jealous of—What? You are not very wise.  
Does not the good Book tell you anything?

“In David's time poor Michal had to go.  
Jealous of God? Well, if you like it so.”

## DEMOS

### I

ALL you that are enamored of my name  
And least intent on what most I require,  
Beware; for my design and your desire,  
Deplorably, are not as yet the same.  
Beware, I say, the failure and the shame  
Of losing that for which you now aspire  
So blindly, and of hazarding entire  
The gift that I was bringing when I came.

Give as I will, I cannot give you sight  
Whereby to see that with you there are some  
To lead you, and be led. But they are dumb  
Before the wrangling and the shrill delight  
Of your deliverance that has not come,  
And shall not, if I fail you—as I might.

## DEMOS

### II

So LITTLE have you seen of what awaits  
Your fevered glimpse of a democracy  
Confused and foiled with an equality  
Not equal to the envy it creates,  
That you see not how near you are the gates  
Of an old king who listens fearfully  
To you that are outside and are to be  
The noisy lords of imminent estates.

Rather be then your prayer that you shall have  
Your kingdom undishonored. Having all,  
See not the great among you for the small,  
But hear their silence; for the few shall save  
The many, or the many are to fall—  
Still to be wrangling in a noisy grave.

## BEN TROVATO

THE deacon thought. "I know them," he began,  
"And they are all you ever heard of them—  
Allurable to no sure theorem,  
The scorn or the humility of man.  
You say 'Can I believe it?'—and I can;  
And I'm unwilling even to condemn  
The benefaction of a stratagem  
Like hers—and I'm a Presbyterian.

"Though blind, with but a wandering hour to live,  
He felt the other woman in the fur  
That now the wife had on. Could she forgive  
All that? Apparently. Her rings were gone,  
Of course; and when he found that she had none,  
He smiled—as he had never smiled at her."

## THE TREE IN PAMELA'S GARDEN

PAMELA was too gentle to deceive  
Her roses. "Let the men stay where they are,"  
She said, "and if Apollo's avatar  
Be one of them, I shall not have to grieve."  
And so she made all Tilbury Town believe  
She sighed a little more for the North Star  
Than over men, and only in so far  
As she was in a garden was like Eve.

Her neighbors—doing all that neighbors can  
To make romance of reticence meanwhile—  
Seeing that she had never loved a man,  
Wished Pamela had a cat, or a small bird,  
And only would have wondered at her smile  
Could they have seen that she had overheard.



## VAIN GRATUITIES

NEVER was there a man much uglier  
In eyes of other women, or more grim:  
"The Lord has filled her chalice to the brim,  
So let us pray she's a philosopher,"  
They said; and there was more they said of her—  
Deeming it, after twenty years with him,  
No wonder that she kept her figure slim  
And always made you think of lavender.

But she, demure as ever, and as fair,  
Almost, as they remembered her before  
She found him, would have laughed had she been  
there;  
And all they said would have been heard no more  
Than foam that washes on an island shore  
Where there are none to listen or to care.

## JOB THE REJECTED

THEY met, and overwhelming her distrust  
With penitence, he praised away her fear;  
They married, and Job gave him half a year  
To wreck the temple, as we knew he must.  
He fumbled hungrily to readjust  
A fallen altar, but the road was clear  
By which it was her will to disappear  
That evening when Job found him in the dust.

Job would have deprecated such a way  
Of heaving fuel on a sacred fire,  
Yet even the while we saw it going out,  
Hardly was Job to find his hour to shout;  
And Job was not, so far as we could say,  
The confirmation of her soul's desire.

## LOST ANCHORS

LIKE a dry fish flung inland far from shore,  
There lived a sailor, warped and ocean-browned,  
Who told of an old vessel, harbor-drowned  
And out of mind a century before,  
Where divers, on descending to explore  
A legend that had lived its way around  
The world of ships, in the dark hulk had found  
Anchors, which had been seized and seen no more.

Improving a dry leisure to invest  
Their misadventure with a manifest  
Analogy that he may read who runs,  
The sailor made it old as ocean grass—  
Telling of much that once had come to pass  
With him, whose mother should have had no sons.

## RECALLED

LONG after there were none of them alive  
About the place—where there is now no place  
But a walled hole where fruitless vines embrace  
Their parent skeletons that yet survive  
In evil thorns—none of us could arrive  
At a more cogent answer to their ways  
Than one old Isaac in his latter days  
Had humor or compassion to contrive.

I mentioned them, and Isaac shook his head:  
“The Power that you call yours and I call mine  
Extinguished in the last of them a line  
That Satan would have disinherited.  
When we are done with all but the Divine,  
We die.” And there was no more to be said.

## MODERNITIES

SMALL knowledge have we that by knowledge met  
May not some day be quaint as any told  
In almagest or chronicle of old,  
Whereat we smile because we are as yet  
The last—though not the last who may forget  
What cleavings and abrasions manifold  
Have marked an armor that was never scrolled  
Before for human glory and regret.

With infinite unseen enemies in the way  
We have encountered the intangible,  
To vanquish where our fathers, who fought well,  
Scarce had assumed endurance for a day;  
Yet we shall have our darkness, even as they,  
And there shall be another tale to tell.

## AFTERTHOUGHTS

WE PARTED where the old gas-lamp still burned  
Under the wayside maple and walked on,  
Into the dark, as we had always done;  
And I, no doubt, if he had not returned,  
Might yet be unaware that he had earned  
More than earth gives to many who have won  
More than it has to give when they are gone—  
As duly and indelibly I learned.

The sum of all that he came back to say  
Was little then, and would be less to-day:  
With him there were no Delphic heights to climb,  
Yet his were somehow nearer the sublime.  
He spoke, and went again by the old way—  
Not knowing it would be for the last time.

## CAPUT MORTUUM

Nor even if with a wizard force I might  
Have summoned whomsoever I would name,  
Should anyone else have come than he who came,  
Uncalled, to share with me my fire that night;  
For though I should have said that all was right,  
Or right enough, nothing had been the same  
As when I found him there before the flame,  
Always a welcome and a useful sight.

Unfailing and exuberant all the time,  
Having no gold he paid with golden rhyme,  
Of older coinage than his old defeat,  
A debt that like himself was obsolete  
In Art's long hazard, where no man may choose  
Whether he play to win or toil to lose.

## MONADNOCK THROUGH THE TREES

BEFORE there was in Egypt any sound  
Of those who reared a more prodigious means  
For the self-heavy sleep of kings and queens  
Than hitherto had mocked the most renowned,—  
Unvisioned here and waiting to be found,  
Alone, amid remote and older scenes,  
You loomed above ancestral evergreens  
Before there were the first of us around.

And when the last of us, if we know how,  
See farther from ourselves than we do now,  
Assured with other sight than heretofore  
That we have done our mortal best and worst,—  
Your calm will be the same as when the first  
Assyrians went howling south to war.



## THE LONG RACE

UP THE old hill to the old house again  
Where fifty years ago the friend was young  
Who should be waiting somewhere there among  
Old things that least remembered most remain,  
He toiled on with a pleasure that was pain  
To think how soon asunder would be flung  
The curtain half a century had hung  
Between the two ambitions they had slain.

They dredged an hour for words, and then were  
done.

“Good-bye! . . . You have the same old weather-  
vane—

Your little horse that’s always on the run.”  
And all the way down back to the next train,  
Down the old hill to the old road again,  
It seemed as if the little horse had won.

## MANY ARE CALLED

THE Lord Apollo, who has never died,  
Still holds alone his immemorial reign,  
Supreme in an impregnable domain  
That with his magic he has fortified;  
And though melodious multitudes have tried  
In ecstasy, in anguish, and in vain,  
With invocation sacred and profane  
To lure him, even the loudest are outside.

Only at un conjectured intervals,  
By will of him on whom no man may gaze,  
By word of him whose law no man has read,  
A questing light may rift the sullen walls,  
To cling where mostly its infrequent rays  
Fall golden on the patience of the dead.

## HAUNTED HOUSE

HERE was a place where none would ever come  
For shelter, save as we did from the rain.  
We saw no ghost, yet once outside again  
Each wondered why the other should be dumb;  
For we had fronted nothing worse than gloom  
And ruin, and to our vision it was plain  
Where thrift, outshivering fear, had let remain  
Some chairs that were like skeletons of home.

There were no trackless footsteps on the floor  
Above us, and there were no sounds elsewhere.  
But there was more than sound; and there was more  
Than just an axe that once was in the air  
Between us and the chimney, long before  
Our time. So townsmen said who found her there.

## THE SHEAVES

WHERE long the shadows of the wind had rolled,  
Green wheat was yielding to the change assigned;  
And as by some vast magic undivined  
The world was turning slowly into gold.  
Like nothing that was ever bought or sold  
It waited there, the body and the mind;  
And with a mighty meaning of a kind  
That tells the more the more it is not told.

So in a land where all days are not fair,  
Fair days went on till on another day  
A thousand golden sheaves were lying there,  
Shining and still, but not for long to stay—  
As if a thousand girls with golden hair  
Might rise from where they slept and go away.

## KARMA

CHRISTMAS was in the air and all was well  
With him, but for a few confusing flaws  
In divers of God's images. Because  
A friend of his would neither buy nor sell,  
Was he to answer for the axe that fell?  
He pondered; and the reason for it was,  
Partly, a slowly freezing Santa Claus  
Upon the corner, with his beard and bell.

Acknowledging an improvident surprise,  
He magnified a fancy that he wished  
The friend whom he had wrecked were here again.  
Not sure of that, he found a compromise;  
And from the fulness of his heart he fished  
A dime for Jesus who had died for men.

THROUGH an ascending emptiness of night,  
Leaving the flesh and the complacent mind  
Together in their sufficiency behind,  
The soul of man went up to a far height;  
And where those others would have had no sight  
Or sense of else than terror for the blind,  
Soul met the Will, and was again consigned  
To the supreme illusion which is right.

“And what goes on up there,” the Mind inquired,  
“That I know not already to be true?”—  
“More than enough, but not enough for you,”  
Said the descending Soul: “Here in the dark,  
Where you are least revealed when most admired,  
You may still be the bellows and the spark.”

## AS IT LOOKED THEN

IN A sick shade of spruce, moss-webbed, rock-fed,  
Where, long unfollowed by sagacious man,  
A scrub that once had been a pathway ran  
Blindly from nowhere and to nowhere led,  
One might as well have been among the dead  
As half way there alive; so I began  
Like a malingering pioneer to plan  
A vain return—with one last look ahead.

And it was then that like a spoken word  
Where there was none to speak, insensibly  
A flash of blue that might have been a bird  
Grew soon to the calm wonder of the sea—  
Calm as a quiet sky that looked to be  
Arching a world where nothing had occurred.

HERE, if you will, your fancy may destroy  
This house before you and see flaming down  
To ashes and to mysteries the old town  
Where Shakespeare was a lodger for Mountjoy;  
Here played the mighty child who for his toy  
Must have the world—king, wizard, sage and clown,  
Queen, fiend and trollop—and with no more  
renown,  
May be, than friends and envy might annoy.

And in this little grave-yard, if you will,  
He stands again, as often long ago  
He stood considering what it signified.  
We may have doubted, or be doubting still—  
But whether it be all so, or all not so,  
One has to walk up Wood Street from Cheapside.



## A MAN IN OUR TOWN

WE PITIED him as one too much at ease  
With Nemesis and impending indigence;  
Also, as if by way of recompense,  
We sought him always in extremities;  
And while ways more like ours had more to please  
Our common code than his improvidence,  
There lurked alive in our experience  
His homely genius for emergencies.

He was not one for men to marvel at,  
And yet there was another neighborhood  
When he was gone, and many a thrifty tear.  
There was an increase in a man like that;  
And though he be forgotten, it was good  
For more than one of you that he was here.

I SHOULD have glanced and passed him, naturally,  
But his designs and mine were opposite;  
He spoke, and having temporized a bit,  
He said that he was going to the sea:  
“I’ve watched on highways for so long,” said he,  
“That I’ll go down there to be sure of it.”  
And all at once his famished eyes were lit  
With a wrong light—or so it was to me.

That evening there was talk along the shore  
Of one who shot a stranger, saying first:  
“You should have come when called. This afternoon  
A gentleman unknown to me before,  
With deference always due to souls accurst,  
Came out of his own grave—and not too soon.”

## NOT ALWAYS

### I

IN SURETY and obscurity twice mailed,  
And first achieving with initial rout  
A riddance of weak fear and weaker doubt,  
He strove alone. But when too long assailed  
By nothing, even a stronger might have quailed  
As he did, and so might have gazed about  
Where he could see the last light going out,  
Almost as if the fire of God had failed.

And so it was till out of silence crept  
Invisible avengers of a name  
Unknown, like jungle-hidden jaguars.  
But there were others coming who had kept  
Their watch and word; and out of silence came  
A song somewhat as of the morning stars.

## NOT ALWAYS

### II

THERE were long days when there was nothing  
said,  
And there were longer nights where there was  
nought  
But silence and recriminating thought  
Between them like a field unharvested.  
Antipathy was now their daily bread,  
And pride the bitter drink they daily fought  
To throw away. Release was all they sought  
Of hope, colder than moonlight on the dead.

Wishing the other might at once be sure  
And strong enough to shake the prison down,  
Neither believed, although they strove together,  
How long the stolid fabric would endure  
That was a wall for them, and was to frown  
And shine for them through many sorts of  
weather.

## WHY HE WAS THERE

MUCH as he left it when he went from us  
Here was the room again where he had been  
So long that something of him should be seen,  
Or felt—and so it was. Incredulous,  
I turned about, loath to be greeted thus,  
And there he was in his old chair, serene  
As ever, and as laconic and as lean  
As when he lived, and as cadaverous.

Calm as he was of old when we were young,  
He sat there gazing at the pallid flame  
Before him. "And how far will this go on?"  
I thought. He felt the failure of my tongue,  
And smiled: "I was not here until you came;  
And I shall not be here when you are gone."

## GLASS HOUSES

LEARN if you must, but do not come to me  
For truth of what your pleasant neighbor says  
Behind you of your looks or of your ways,  
Or of your worth and virtue generally;  
If he's a pleasure to you, let him be—  
Being the same to him; and let your days  
Be tranquil, having each the other's praise,  
And each his own opinion peaceably.

Two others once did love each other well,  
Yet not so well but that a pungent word  
From each came stinging home to the wrong ears.  
The rest would be an overflow to tell,  
Surely; and you may slowly have inferred  
That you may not be here a thousand years.

## THE LAGGARDS

SCORNERS of earth, you that have one foot shod  
With skyward wings, but are not flying yet,  
You that observe no goal or station set  
Between your groping and the towers of God  
For which you languish, may it not be odd  
And avaricious of you to forget  
Your toll of an accumulating debt  
For dusty leagues that you are still to plod?

But many have paid, you say, and paid again;  
And having had worse than death are still alive,  
Only to pay seven fold, and seven times seven.  
They are many; and for cause not always plain,  
They are the laggards among those who strive  
On earth to raise the golden dust of heaven.

## NEW ENGLAND

HERE where the wind is always north-north-east  
And children learn to walk on frozen toes,  
Wonder begets an envy of all those  
Who boil elsewhere with such a lyric yeast  
Of love that you will hear them at a feast  
Where demons would appeal for some repose,  
Still clamoring where the chalice overflows  
And crying wildest who have drunk the least.

Passion is here a soilure of the wits,  
We're told, and Love a cross for them to bear;  
Joy shivers in the corner where she knits  
And Conscience always has the rocking-chair,  
Cheerful as when she tortured into fits  
The first cat that was ever killed by Care.



“IF THE LORD WOULD MAKE  
WINDOWS IN HEAVEN”

SHE who had eyes but had not wherewithal  
To see that he was doomed to his own way,  
Dishonored his illusions day by day,  
And year by year was more angelical.  
Flaunting an injured instinct for the small,  
She stifled always more than she would say;  
Nursing a fear too futile to betray,  
She sewed, and waited for the roof to fall.

A seer at home, she saw that his high lights  
That were not shining, and were not afire,  
Were such as never would be seen from there;  
A saint abroad, she saw him on the heights,  
And feared for him—who, if he went much higher,  
Might one day not be seen from anywhere.

## BATTLE AFTER WAR

Out of a darkness, into a slow light  
That was at first no light that had a name,  
Like one thrust up from Erebus he came,  
Groping alone, blind with remembered sight.  
But there were not those faces in the night,  
And all those eyes no longer were aflame  
That once he feared and hated, being the same  
As his that were the fuel of his fright.

He shone, for one so long among the lost,  
Like a stout Roman after Pentecost:  
"Terror will yield as much as we dare face  
Ourselves in it, and it will yield no more,"  
He said. And we see two now in his place,  
Where there was room for only one before.

## THE GARDEN OF THE NATIONS

(1923)

WHEN we that are the bitten flower and fruit  
Of time's achievement are undone between  
The blight above, where blight has always been,  
And the old worm of evil at the root,  
We shall not have to crumble destitute  
Of recompense, or measure our chagrin;  
We shall be dead, and so shall not be seen  
Amid the salvage of our disrepute.

And when we are all gone, shall mightier seeds  
And scions of a warmer spring put forth  
A bloom and fruitage of a larger worth  
Than ours? God save the garden, if by chance,  
Or by approved short sight, more numerous weeds  
And weevils be the next inheritance!

## REUNION

By some derision of wild circumstance  
Not then our pleasure somehow to perceive,  
Last night we fell together to achieve  
A light eclipse of years. But the pale chance  
Of youth resumed was lost. Time gave a glance  
At each of us, and there was no reprieve;  
And when there was at last a way to leave,  
Farewell was a foreseen extravagance.

Tonight the west has yet a failing red,  
While silence whispers of all things not here;  
And round there where the fire was that is dead,  
Dusk-hidden tenants that are chairs appear.  
The same old stars will soon be overhead,  
But not so friendly and not quite so near.

## A CHRISTMAS SONNET

*For One in Doubt*

WHILE you that in your sorrow disavow  
Service and hope, see love and brotherhood  
Far off as ever, it will do no good  
For you to wear his thorns upon your brow  
For doubt of him. And should you question **how**  
To serve him best, he might say, if he could,  
“Whether or not the cross was made of **wood**  
Whereon you nailed me, is no matter now.”

Though other saviors have in older lore  
A legend, and for older gods have died—  
Though death may wear the crown it **always wore**,  
And ignorance be still the sword of pride—  
Something is here that was not here before,  
And strangely has not yet been crucified.











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